

Remarks

The Examiner is thanked for his time during telephonic interviews with Applicants' representative Jason D. Eisenberg on March 13, 15, and 28, 2006, and the various voice messages before and after the interviews.

Claims 1-11 and 18-26 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute similar or broader claims in a continuation application. Claims 27-33 are sought to be added. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 27-33 are pending in the application, with claim 27 being the sole independent claim. No new matter has been entered based on these amendments.

Based on the above amendments and following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Claim Objection

Claim 10 was objected to as having improper dependence from claim 1. Claim 10 has been cancelled for other reasons, and in order to expedite prosecution. Accordingly, Applicants believe this objection has been rendered moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 20 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,981,697 to Buckthorpe ("Buckthorpe"). Claims 1-6, 9-11, 18, 19, 21-24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Buckthorpe in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,698,882 to Lang ("Lang"). Applicants respectively traverse these rejections.

While Applicants disagree with the Examiner that the applied references teach or suggest the previously pending claims, in order to expedite prosecution Applicants have cancelled the previously pending claims. Accordingly, Applicants believe these rejections have been rendered moot.

New claims 27-33

New claims 27-33 recite combinations of elements neither taught nor suggested by the art of record. Favorable consideration of these new claims is respectfully requested.

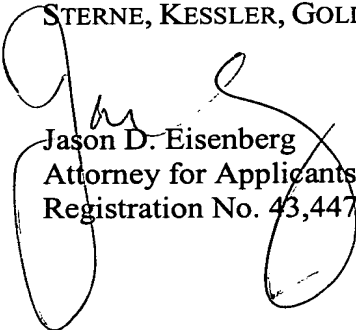
Conclusion

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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